



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS

The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of
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A translator points out features of the historic Wentworth-by-the-Sea hotel in a print that was presented as a gift to members of the Japan Nuclear Energy Safety Organization during a dinner on March 13th. The head of the delegation, Director-General Mitsuo Nittami is at the left. N.H. Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Christopher M. Pope holds the print at right.

JAPANESE NUCLEAR SAFETY DELEGATION VISITS SEABROOK – Members of the Japan Nuclear Energy Safety Organization spent three days in mid-March visiting the Seabrook Station nuclear power plant and meeting with plant and state emergency planners. Delegation members had a tour of Seabrook and observed an exercise from the Emergency Operations Facility in Newington. The delegation also had a tour of the Indian Point nuclear power plant in Buchanan, N.Y. The Japanese agency is the equivalent of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The visit was sponsored by KLD Associates, a Seabrook contractor.

HSEM DIRECTOR TOURS WASHINGTON FACILITIES – N.H. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Director Christopher M. Pope was in Washington, D.C., March 19th and 20th to tour the Department of Homeland Security's National Operations Center (NOC) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Resource Coordination Center (RCC). The NOC is the federal government's primary gathering point for status information on any domestic or international incident that could affect the security of the U.S. It is all-hazards and multidisciplinary and staffed by personnel from a wide variety of federal agencies, plus state and local personnel. The RCC is FEMA's coordination center for responding to major disasters. Pope toured the facilities with other New England state emergency management directors and staff from FEMA Region I. He said the experience was valuable, allowing state officials to meet the federal officials they would be dealing with in an emergency and understand their operations and procedures.

N.H. MAKES MAJOR PROGRESS ON HAZ-MIT PLANNING – About 140 New Hampshire communities have received approval from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for local Hazard Mitigation Plans, giving the Granite State one of the highest rates of compliance in the country. Another 70 communities are currently working on their plans. Haz-Mit plans are required for a community to receive Hazard Mitigation grants, which are used to correct identified hazards in an effort to head off future disasters. Hazard Mitigation grant money is included as a part of FEMA disaster assistance. Hazard Mitigation grants from the October 2005 and May 2006 flooding totaled \$2.5 million. Regional Planning Commissions are providing technical assistance to communities in preparing their Hazard Mitigation plans.

Also on the subject of planning, local Emergency Operations Plans should be reviewed once a year and updated as necessary. EOPs in approximately 115 New Hampshire communities have been updated to comply with the National Incident Management System.

N.H. RECEIVES \$1.9 MILLION IN EMPG FUNDING – New Hampshire will receive just over \$1.9 million in Emergency Management Planning Grant money in the coming federal fiscal year. Of that, approximately \$1.1 million will go to N.H. Homeland Security and Emergency Management to fund agency operations. Another \$800,000 will be allocated for grants to local communities for hazard mitigation projects, emergency plan development, training and exercises. About \$194 million in EMPG money was allocated nationwide.

EXERCISES COMING UP – An exercise is being held on April 14th to test the state's response to a major infectious disease outbreak. The exercise, to be conducted at Points of Dispensing (PODs) in Berlin, Concord and Rochester, will involve mass prophylaxis with pharmaceuticals provided by the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). The pharmaceuticals will be airlifted in to Concord and separated by National Guard personnel into shipments for each of the three PODs.

Also, the first Combined Functional Drill for the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant is scheduled for April 18th.

MANCHESTER DODGES EXPLOSION DURING MAJOR GAS LEAK –

Manchester first responders and Key Span Energy personnel worked feverishly March 15th to locate a major gas leak in the city's downtown in time to avoid a potentially catastrophic explosion. The incident began around 8 a.m. when pedestrians noticed the strong smell of gas in the area of Elm Street and Hanover Street, near City Hall. Approximately 500 people were evacuated from businesses in the area and traffic was blocked off as fire fighters and Key Span workers checked for gas in nearby buildings and searched for the source of the leak. The utility identified the leak as a cracked eight-inch high-pressure line. The incident was declared under control at 2:30, but work continued into the evening to repair the gas line and the street. No one was injured in the incident.

N.H. ALL SHOOK UP IN MARCH – A LITTLE ANYWAY –

New Hampshire had two earthquakes in March, although anyone without a seismograph should be forgiven for not noticing. The first was March 13th, a magnitude 1.5 quake centered 5.6 miles SSE of Franklin (Lat: 43.37N, Lon: 71.62W) at 1:21 a.m. The second was on March 21st, a magnitude 3.0 quake in the Campton/Squam Lake area (Lat: 43.84N, Lon: 71.64W) at 11:55 a.m. No damage or injuries were reported in connection with either quake. A number of people who did feel the quake called WMUR-TV, but a check with area emergency management directors did not turn up any problems.

For the record, there were five earthquakes in the state last year, all in central New Hampshire, ranging from magnitude 1.5 to 2.3.

HSEM STAFF ADDRESS SAFETY COUNCIL –

N.H. Homeland Security and Emergency Management was well-represented at the Safety & Health Council of Northern New England conference in Nashua on March 21st. Director Christopher M. Pope and Natural Hazards Officer Gregory Champlin addressed the council members, who represented safety personnel from a variety of northern New England-based companies. Pope outlined the possibility of a terrorist attack in New Hampshire and stressed the need for better communication and coordination to prevent or respond to such an attack. Champlin discussed the most common natural hazards that threaten the state.

OPERATION FLOOD RECOVERY WRAPS UP OCTOBER '05 FLOOD –

Operation Flood Recovery has concluded its efforts to provide assistance to victims of the October 2005 flood, reporting a total of \$4.6 million in aid. The largest single source of financial aid was \$1.9 million for a state buyout of unusable property. FEMA aid for public infrastructure totaled \$1 million. Operation Flood Recovery itself distributed \$318,000, which was raised by a telethon on WMUR-TV and other private contributions. Nearly half of the aid went to Alstead, which was hardest hit by the flood.